

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, "December 7, 1941—a date which will live in infamy" began at 7:55 a.m. when Japan launched an offensive to destroy the United States Pacific Fleet. The losses suffered that day shocked our Nation with the realization that American soil was not immune to the ravages of war—at the end of the attack, more than 3,000 Americans were dead, missing, or wounded. We resolved to boldly defend our shores against further devastation. Just 4 years later, the same fleet that the Japanese had attempted to destroy at Pearl Harbor sailed triumphantly into Tokyo Bay.

The attack of Pearl Harbor marked the beginning of America's total mobilization against a common enemy, and the United States soon became the world's "Arsenal of Democracy." Citizens worked together toward a common goal as the "We Can Do It" attitude spread across the country. The landscape of American business was forever changed as over 19 million women and many minority workers took high-skill jobs to contribute to the war effort.

The courageous veterans who fought selflessly to bring an end to the war in the Pacific deserve our highest respect and our most profound gratitude. Today we honor the sacrifices that led to the ultimate victory—the triumph of freedom over tyranny. We also pay tribute to the families who contributed so much with their support, sacrifices, and prayers from the home front. A grateful Nation will long remember those who came home and those who did not.

In the post-Cold War era, it is vital that we pass along the lessons learned from Pearl Harbor to a new generation of Americans. We must never allow our country to be unprepared, and we must never again isolate ourselves from the problems of the world. This is the legacy we leave to our young people, and it is our responsibility to continue to teach them those lessons. By doing so, we reaffirm the values of democracy, freedom, and leadership that have made America great.

The Congress, by Public Law 103–308, has designated December 7, 1995, as "National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day."

Now Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,
President of the United States of America,

do hereby proclaim December 7, 1995, as National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day. I urge all Americans to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities in honor of the Americans who served at Pearl Harbor. I also ask all Federal departments and agencies, organizations, and individuals to fly the flag of the United States at half-staff on this day in honor of those Americans who died as a result of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of December, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twentieth.

William J. Clinton

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on December 8.

Remarks on Lighting the National Christmas Tree

December 6, 1995

Thank you so much. To John Betchkal, the Pageant of Peace Chairman; Reverend John Tavlarides; to the Sherando High School Choir, congratulations, you guys were great tonight; to Brendan and Bridget Walsh; the Washington Ballet; to Denyce Graves and Jack Jones and Kathie Lee Gifford, and the Navy Band; and of course, to Santa Claus. I would come here every year just to see Santa Claus.

We gather to begin our Nation's celebration of the Christmas season with the lighting of this magnificent tree, a symbol, as evergreens have always been, of the infinite capacity of nature and people to renew themselves. We give gifts, and we count our blessings.

My fellow Americans, I have just returned from a very moving trip to Europe, to England and to Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, to Germany to see our troops, and to Spain. And I can tell you that among the things that I feel most grateful for at this Christmas time is the way people around the

world look at our America. They see a nation graced by peace and prosperity, a land of freedom and fairness. And even though it imposes extra burdens on us, they trust us to work with them to share the blessings of peace.

This is my second Christmas tree lighting of the season, for just a few days ago I was in Belfast with the people of Northern Ireland, Protestant and Catholic alike, searching, yearning, longing for peace, celebrating their second Christmas of peace. I'm proud that I was introduced there by two children, a little Catholic girl named Catherine Hamill, and a young Protestant boy named David Sterritt, who joined hands and told the world of their hopes for the future, a future in which the only barriers they face are the limits of their dreams. That is the future we should want for our children and for all the children of the world.

I'm very pleased that Catherine Hamill, who touched the whole world with the story of her suffering and her family's losses in Northern Ireland, and her family are here with us tonight to celebrate this lighting of the Christmas tree. And I'd like to ask her to stand up right down here and ask all of you to give her a fine hand. She has come all the way from Northern Ireland.

Remember at this Christmas time we celebrate the birth of a homeless child, whose only shelter was the straw of a manger, but who grew to become the Prince of Peace. The Prince of Peace said, "Blessed are the peacemakers." Let us bless the peacemakers at this Christmas time from the Middle East to Northern Ireland to our own troops in Bosnia. Let us pray especially for our peacemakers, those who will go to Bosnia and those who are soon to come home from Haiti.

And let us resolve, my fellow Americans, to be peacemakers. For just as so many nations around the world and so many children around the world cry for peace, so do we need peace here at home in our toughest neighborhoods, where there are children, so many children who deserve to have their childhood and their future free and peaceful.

And let us remember from the example of the Prince of Peace how even the humblest of us can do, through acts of goodness

and reconciliation, extraordinary things. And as we light this wonderful Christmas tree, let us all remember that together a million small lights add up to make a great blaze of glory, not for ourselves but for our families, our Nation and the world, and for the future of our children.

Merry Christmas, and blessed are the peacemakers.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:45 p.m. on the Ellipse during the annual Christmas Pageant of Peace. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. John Tavlarides, who recited the Christmas prayer; Brendan and Bridget Walsh, Camp Fire Boys and Girls, Pittsburgh, PA; entertainers Denyce Graves, Jack Jones, and Kathie Lee Gifford; and television weatherman Willard Scott.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Bosnia

December 6, 1995

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Mr. President:)

I last reported to the Congress on September 1, 1995, concerning the use of U.S. aircraft in support of United Nations and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) efforts in the former Yugoslavia. In that report I noted our diplomatic efforts to assist the parties to reach a negotiated settlement to the conflict. I am gratified to report that those efforts have borne fruit.

On November 21, 1995, the Presidents of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia, and, on behalf of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the President of the Republic of Serbia initialed a peace agreement to end the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. The agreement has 11 annexes including, among others, Military Aspects, Regional Stabilization, Elections, Human Rights, Refugees and Displaced Persons, and Civilian Implementation. These annexes were also signed or initialed by the state parties, and where appropriate, by officials from the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is the first step in a process that will lead to formal signing of the agreement on December 14 in Paris.

As a result of this important first step, consistent with our consultations with the Con-